

# A BARTERED LIFE.

BY MARION HARLAND.

## INTERNATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

### CHAPTER IX.—(CONTINUED.)

Opposition was futile, but Constance's countenance was so downcast at the prospect of the excursion, that Edward made a pretext, before going out, to call her into the adjoining sitting-room. "How have I forfeited my place in your good graces?" he began, in playfulness, that was lost in earnestness before he finished his speech. "I have tried to persuade myself that your cold avoidance of me for weeks past, and your rejection of my services whenever it is possible for you to dispense with them, was, in part, an unfounded fancy of my own, and partly the result of your absorption in the dear duty that has demanded your time and thoughts. I have begun lately to have other fears—dreads lest I had unwittingly wounded or displeased you. Do me the justice to believe that, if this be so, the offense was unconscious."

"You have offered none—none whatever!" interposed Constance, with cold emphasis. "I am sorry my manner has given rise to such apprehensions."

"That is not spoken like the frank sister of a month ago," said Edward, retaining the hand she would have withdrawn. "I will not release you until you tell me what is the shadow upon the affection that was to me more dear than any other friendship, and which I dared hope was much to you. Be, for one instant, yourself, and tell me all."

She was very pale, but, in desperation, she tried to laugh. "You must not call me to account for my looks and actions nowadays, Edward. I think sometimes that I am not quite sane. I have gone through much suffering; been the prey of imaginings that almost deprived me of reason, besides enduring the real and present trial. And heaven knows how unready I was for it all!"

"One word, my dear girl, and my inquisition is over. Assure me honestly and without fear of wounding me, have you ever, in your most secret thought, blamed me for the casualty which so nearly widowed you? I did try, as you can bear me witness, to dissuade him whom we both love from the experiment that cost him so dear. The idea that you may have doubted this has pained me unexpressibly."

"Dismiss the suspicion at once and forever!" Constance looked steadily into his face and spoke calmly. "The thought has never entered my mind. I blame no one for my trouble—excepting myself!"

Before she could divine his purpose, Edward had put his arm over her shoulder and pressed his lips to hers. "Let bygones be bygones!" he said, brightly and fondly. "We have too much to live and to hope for to waste time in nursing unhealthy surmises and fears."

"Oh!" The sharp little interjection came from the threshold of the door leading into the hall, where Miss Field was discovered in a fine attitude of bashful apology, faintly flavored with prudish consternation. "I did not dream you were here. I was on my way to my cousin's room!" she continued, in a prodigious flutter of ringlets and shoulders. "I beg a million pardons, I am sure."

"You need not beg one!" said the undaunted Edward, without releasing Constance. "Constance and I have been settling a trivial misunderstanding in good boy-and-girl style—have just 'kissed and made up,' and we now mean to be better friends than ever."

"He! he! you are excessively candid, to be sure!" tittered Harriet. "But—shaking her black curls—"Mrs. Withers knows men and human nature too well to believe quite all you say. We must not forget, my dear madam, that men were deceivers ever."

"You speak feelingly," said Edward, carelessly following Constance with his eye, as she moved silently toward her husband's chamber. "I shall caution the lady of my love—should the gods ever bestow one upon me—not to sip of the bitter waters of your wisdom."

Had he seen the glitter of the round, black orbs that pursued his retiring figure, he might have made a more thoughtful exit, his run down the stairs less swift, the air he hummed, as he went, less gay. He had a pleasant drive; Constance an hour of mingled sweet and bitterness. It was difficult to bear her part in the apparent renewal of the familiar intercourse of other days, without relaxing the severe guard she had set upon herself from the moment she discovered the true nature of the sentiment she entertained for her husband's brother. She could not help delighting in his society, in the manifold proofs of loving concern for her comfort and happiness of which she was the recipient. Yet, underlying this secret and fleeting joy, was the ever-present shame that marked her remembrance of her guilty weakness, and the despairing knowledge that remorse, duty and resolve had thus far availed nothing to conquer it.

She looked jaded rather than refreshed upon her return, although she had curtailed the ride in opposition to Edward's advice. Wild, rebellious thoughts fought for mastery within her all the while she was with him, the promptings of an insane familiarity she could not cast out. "If I had met him two years ago instead of his brother, and he had wooed me, the love which is now my disgrace would have been my glory," she was tempted to repeat, again and again. "Yet my fitness to receive his affection and my need of him are the same to-day as they were then. Is he the less my companion

soul, the mate God meant for me, because, led by other's counsels, I blundered into a loveless connection with another! Which is the criminal bond—that ordained by my Maker, or the compact which has had no blessing save the approval of cold-hearted and mercenary mortals? Outwardly we must remain as we are; but who is defrauded if I dream of what might have been? If I love him for what he is in himself, not for what he is to me?"

Then, shaking off the spell, she would loathe herself for the vile suggestions, and pray, in a blind, heathenish way, to Him who had sent her pain, to sustain her under it, to keep her from falling into the fouler mire of open defiance of her husband's claims upon her reality in word and act, to hold her fast to the semblance of right and honor.

Parting from Edward at the outer entrance with a brief phrase of thanks for his kindness in accompanying her, she ran up to her husband's room and opened the door without knocking. A gentleman, whom she recognized as a prominent city lawyer, stood by the lounge with a paper in his hand. Two young men, apparently clerks, were withdrawn a little into the background and a table bearing writing materials was between them and the others.

"You acknowledge this instrument to be your latest will and testament, and in token thereof, have set hereto your signature and seal?" the lawyer was saying as the door swung noiselessly ajar, and Constance stopped, unable to advance or retreat.

Mr. Withers glanced around when he had given his assent. "Come in, my dear," he said, quietly. "We shall soon be through this little matter."

### CHAPTER X.

HE dropped into a chair near the door, her heart palpitating with force that beat every drop of blood from her cheeks. Some sudden and awful change must have taken place while she was out to call for the presence of these men. Her frame was chill as with the shadow of death, but the one overpowering thought that smote her was that her husband's approaching decease was the direct answer of an angry Judge to her wicked outcry against her fate and longings to escape it. In this grisly shape was the freedom to appear for which she had panted. But she knew that when the cage was torn down she would feel like a murderer. She never forgot the short-lived horror of that moment.

Mr. Withers dismissed his visitors when the witnesses had affixed their names to the will, and they bowed themselves out, each noting, more or less furtively, as he passed, the dilated eyes and colorless face of the wife, and drawing his own conclusions therefrom.

She got up and walked totteringly forward at her husband's gesture. He was no paler than when she left him, and smiled more easily than his habit, when he noticed the signs of her extreme alarm. "I was afraid you would be frightened if I talked in your hearing of making my will," he said, encouragingly. "To avoid this, I arranged that Mr. Hall should wait upon me while you were driving. He was behind his time, and your ear back earlier than I anticipated. I regret the meeting only for your sake. Perhaps it is as well, however, that I should acquaint you with some of the provisions of the instrument you saw in Mr. Hall's hand."

"Please do not! I cannot bear to hear or speak of it!" protested Constance, the tears starting to her eyes. "It all seems so dreadful."

"It will not hasten my death one hour," Mr. Withers was not quite ready to pass over without rebuke an absurd superstition he considered unworthy a rational being, even though the offender was his wife. "You shall know this. I made another will two years since, but circumstances have led me to regard it as injudicious, if not unfair. We business men are superior to the dread of looking forward to the one certain event of mortality. We calculate the probable effect of our demise, as we do other changes in the mercantile and social world. By the terms of this will, as I was about to remark, my property, with the exception of a legacy to Harriet Field, is divided equally between yourself and Edward. And he is appointed sole executor. In the event of my death he will be your nearest connection and safest adviser. I wish you to remember this. It is hardly to be expected that you, although a fair judge of character, should be as conversant with the qualities that fit him to assume these responsibilities as I am, who have been his business partner ever since he was twenty-one."

He was astonished that his wife, instead of rendering a submissive verbal acquiescence to his spoken and written decree, began to weep so violently as to hinder herself from listening or replying to his speech. She had never conducted herself in this irrational fashion before in his sight, and he was naturally exceedingly perplexed. Aware that any attempt to soothe her would be awkward work to him, he lay quiet for a minute, hoping the emotion would expend itself without his interference. Finally, he adjudged it to be but reasonable that she should set a bound to her grief at a point somewhat short

of hysterics or convulsions, and addressed her with the most stringent appeal he could think of. "Really, Constance, your agitation is exciting me most unpleasantly. I fear I shall be feverish when the doctor calls, if this sort of thing is kept up." He did not mean to be unkind or selfish. He believed his health to be of supreme importance in her esteem, and that the recollection of this would set her to rights. The experiment succeeded to a charm. The sobbing flow of briny drops was stanch on the instant.

"I beg your pardon," stammered Constance, straightening herself up. "I will control myself better hereafter. It is time for your cordial. May I pour it out for you?" It was inevitable that the confession she had meditated, while he told her of his arrangements for her future, betraying with a child's artlessness the perfectness of his trust in his brother and in herself, the full outflow of penitence, and deprecation, and entreaty for pardon, of which the tears were but the type and premonition, should be checked by the querulous reference to his personal discomfort. But the sudden and disagreeable reaction induced by it was hardly an excuse for the hardening of her heart and dulling of the sensibilities, just now so tender, which filled her mind with sullen resentment against him who had repelled her confidence. "He will never understand me. We are antagonistic as oil and water," she excused this by thinking. "The more closely I imitate his icy propriety the better matched we shall be. I was a fool to imagine anything else." And thus slipped by the fairest chance of reconciliation and real union that was ever offered the ill-assorted pair.

With Mr. Withers' returning strength everything seemed to fall back into the old train. Except that invitations were less frequent as the season waned, and that Edward and Constance passed fewer evenings abroad and more at home, that Mr. Withers rode to his office every morning and returned at noon, to spend the rest of the day upon the sofa in the library exchanging his after dinner for an easy chair in the parlor, the mode of life in the household varied in no important respect from what it had been prior to his accident.

## FARM AND GARDEN.

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO AGRICULTURISTS.

Some Up-to-date Hints About Cultivation of the Soil and Yields Thereof—Horticulture, Viticulture and Floriculture.

D. LYMAN, writing in Garden and Forest, says: Mr. B. E. Fernow, chief of the Bureau of Forestry, referring to a grove of pines with which I have been experimenting for more than 20 years, says in Garden and Forest:

Mr. Lyman has a growth of white pine trees two-thirds of an acre in extent, 50 to 55 years of age, which he has thinned, so that in 1894 only 146 trees remained, or 223 to the acre. Most of his trees are over 10 inches in diameter, at least 16 of them are over 14 inches, and the best measured 22.2 inches, the height being 70 to 80 feet. The calculated volume corresponds to a production of 7,185 cubic feet of wood an acre, which, under very careful practice, might cut 30,000 board measure.

In view of the vast value and importance of the white pine and the rapidity with which a timber crop of it can be grown, even on land deemed almost worthless, I have been experimenting on a small scale to ascertain its rate of growth and the best treatment of the trees while growing. In this study I have been disappointed at finding so little aid from books. I want to find out how to grow a crop of timber on poor, cheap land as well as the best farmers in the corn belt can grow a crop of corn. I have some 400 acres of mixed growth from 23 to 35 years of age, and most of this has been left to nature. I have thinned some 12 acres of small white pines and pruned some of them.

The little grove referred to by Mr. Fernow is upon a deserted farm which I bought in January, 1870, and, as I remember, the first time I noticed it was a few years later. The trees are close by the highway, less than six miles from the large village of Farmington, less than a mile and a half from a railroad station, and fourteen, twenty and twenty-five miles respectively from the cities of Rochester, Somersworth and Dover, yet this grove with its 108 square rods of land could not probably have been sold at that time for much, if any, over one dollar, and, perhaps, for not over fifty cents. A man thinned the trees, receiving the thinnings as pay, and they made stakes, kindling wood, and, perhaps, a few light top poles for fence. They ought to have been thinned earlier. They were then left either five or seven years, which was too long, before they were thinned again. They have been irregularly thinned from time to time since, and the pruning has been equally irregular. Standing more than 40 miles from my home, they have not been as well cared for as they ought to have been. They have no limbs within 20 feet of the ground, and the first 20 feet of the ground will make very good boards, worth, if cut now, at least twice the price of inch-thick box boards. The larger these trees become the more clear lumber there will be in them, and its value per foot will increase with their size. I have other young pines on the same farm which I have pruned so that the logs from the first 20 feet of their bodies will be perfectly free of knots to within two inches of their hearts, and these knots will be so small, free from blackness and sound, that they will scarcely be noticed in the boards.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### IT WAS A WOMAN'S PRIVILEGE.

Even to a Bank Official She Would Not Tell Her Age.

It was a busy scene at a great bank, says the New York Herald. Long rows of women, some anxious and depressed looking, all of them with an unmistakable air of weariness, were waiting their turn with books to be presented for the semi-annual interest. A pompous and many buttoned official paced back and forth with a look of determination to keep order or die on his grim visage. The woman at the window was a new depositor and there was a longer wait than usual, while she answered all the questions relative to her genealogy and that of her sisters and her cousins and her aunts—information which one must always give to a great bank before it will condescend to receive and sometimes lose one's money.

At last came the fateful question—"What's your age?"

A faint blush stole over the faded cheeks, the antiquated and corkscrew curls quivered with agitation as she murmured: "I'd rather not tell, please."

The bank clerk meant business. He had no sympathy with the maiden modesty of the trembling aspirant to financial dignity. "Oh, but you must tell," he replied, somewhat brusquely.

The blushes grew painful but there was still a loophole of escape. At least all the world should not know her age and raising herself on tiptoe so as to bring her face close to the window—for she was short of stature—she said: "May I whisper it, please?" and the woman behind her will never know how old she was.

### Most Remarkable Canal.

The most remarkable canal in the world is the one between Worsley and St. Helens, in the North of England. It is sixteen miles long and underground from end to end. In Lancashire the coal mines are very extensive, half the country being undermined. Many years ago the managers of the Duke of Bridgewater's estates thought they could save money by transporting the coal underground instead of on the surface; therefore the canal was constructed and the mines connected and drained at the same time. Ordinary canal boats are used, the power being furnished by men. The tunnel arch over the canal is provided with cross pieces, and the men who do the work of propulsion lie on their backs on the loads of coal, and push with their feet against the cross bars of the roof.

### Ireland's Big Cavern.

It has remained for a Frenchman to make the first complete exploration of the largest cavern in the British Islands, that at Mitchelstown, Ireland. The explorer is Monsieur Martel, who has recently become famous for his discoveries in the caverns of France. The Mitchelstown cavern is formed in limestone, and is remarkable for the number and extent of its connected passages which, when plotted upon a chart, resemble the streets of a city. The length of the cave is about a mile and a quarter, and it contains some animal inhabitants, including a species of spider, which are peculiar to it and which have their entire existence within its recesses.

A Frenchman estimates that in a life of fifty years a man sleeps away 6,000 days, walks 300 days, and the rest of the time feeds and fuses.

### Keeping Fall and Winter Apples.

Newspaper bulletin 37, Purdue University Experiment Station: In many localities in Indiana there are often more apples grown than can be disposed of profitably at the time of gathering, and so serious loss to the growers is the result; much of this loss could be prevented by a proper handling of the fruit, and by providing a suitable place for storing until the congested state of the market is relieved. In order to keep well, apples must be picked at the proper time. Care must be exercised in handling to prevent bruises, carefully assorting the ripe from the unripe, the perfect from the imperfect, and storing in a cool, dry place, with plenty of pure air free from all odors of decaying vegetables or other substances. The average fruit-grower does not exercise enough caution in handling and assorting his fruit. The degree of maturity will have much to do with the keeping qualities. A late fall or winter apple should be mature, but not ripe, when it is picked, if it is expected to be kept for any considerable time. The process of ripening is only the first stage of decay, and if this is allowed to continue before picking, till the apple is ripe, or mellow, this breaking down process has proceeded so far that it is a difficult matter to arrest it. As soon, therefore, as the stem will separate freely from its union with the branch, the apple is sufficiently mature for storing. The proper temperature for keeping apples is as nearly 35 degrees Fahr. as it is possible to keep it, and in order to maintain this, it will often be necessary in this climate to provide a separate place for storing the fruit, as the average cellar under the dwelling-house is wholly unfit for this purpose. If the cellar consists of several compartments so that one can be shut off completely from the others, and the temperature in this kept below 40 degrees, it will answer the purpose very well. If this can not be done, a cheap storage house may be built in connection with the ice house, by building a room underneath, having it surrounded with ice on the sides and overhead, with facilities for drainage underneath, keeping the air dry by means of chloride of calcium placed on the floor in an open water tight vessel, such as a large milk crock or pan. In this way the temperature may be kept very near the freezing point the year round, and apples may be kept almost indefinitely.

James Troop, Horticulturist.

Harvesting Beets.—Beets and Mangold Wurzel beets should be pulled and stored before frost. These roots are very susceptible to injury by even a slight frost. In harvesting them be careful not to bruise them. Cut off the tops without cutting into the root itself. They may be stored either in a root cellar or in heaps in the open field. If put up in heaps, make these in the form of a pyramid on dry, high land, and cover first with a good coating of dry straw. Let the roots be dry and as clean from soil as possible when stored. After the heaps have stood for a week or ten days, cover the straw with six inches of soil, except just at the top, which leave open until the heap has finished sweating or severe frost is threatened, and then cover with soil. Beat the soil solid, so that it will shed the rain. If severe frost threatens cover with more soil. If stored in a cellar, allow free ventilation until frost threatens; then close up all openings and cover with straw.—So, Cultivator.

It takes 150 pounds of butter at a good market price to pay for the keeping of a cow one year. At the standard of four per cent of butter fat, that amount of butter will require about 2,500 pounds of milk. Therefore a cow must yield 2,500 pounds of milk, or say 1,700 quarts, to just stand even with her owner, if butter is made. In order to give a fair profit on the investment a cow should yield at least 5,000 pounds of four per cent milk, which would produce say 240 pounds of butter. The value of skim-milk, if handled with skill and intelligence, will be about \$12 a year.

Begin Now.—If you wish to have a nice display of flowers, plant hyacinths, tulips, narcissus, etc., now. Do not wait till next spring when you see your neighbor's flower beds a mass of beauty, and then imagine you can plant in March and April and have the same beautiful hyacinths or tulips as those which were planted in the fall. They peep through the ground when the snow and frost leaves in our northern states and in December and January in the southern states.—Ks.

A very beautiful imitation of tortoise shell is now made of cow's horns.

## SAVED BY LITTLE CHILDREN.

An Episode of an Indian Raid in Utah Nearly Thirty Years Ago.

Robert F. Spearman, attorney for the department of Justice, Washington, is at the Albany. Mr. Spearman has been engaged in taking testimony on behalf of the government in Indian deprecation claims. "In taking testimony in these Indian cases," said Mr. Spearman, "I frequently hear very interesting stories concerning early frontier life. I remember one case in particular, which I thought to be one of the most remarkable exhibitions of courage in an 8-year-old boy that I have ever heard of. It occurred near the town of Beaver, in Utah. A ranch in that vicinity was attacked by the Indians, and one man who was visiting the ranchman killed, and for a while it seemed as if the whole party, wife and children, would fall prey to the savages. The house was surrounded by the Indians, and the people within defended themselves as best they could, but the ranchman, watching his opportunity, lowered his little boy and his daughter, who was but 12 years old, from the back window and told them to try to make their way to the canyon and follow it down to Beaver, where they could obtain help. The two children succeeded in reaching the canyon unobserved, and, with presence of mind and bravery which, I think, is remarkable for a boy of that age, the boy told his sister to follow down one side of the canyon, and he would follow the other, so that in case the Indians should find one of them the other might not be observed. The children succeeded in reaching Beaver, where a relief party was organized, which hastened to the rescue of the besieged party. At the beginning of the siege the Indians had heard the children in the house, and missing their voices the alert savages discovered that they had gone and endeavored to overtake them, but being unsuccessful and knowing that help would soon arrive, withdrew before the rescuers could reach the ranch."—Denver Republican.

### NONSENSE ABOUT SNAKES.

Spell of a Witch Over a Farmer's Daughters. As an illustration of the belief in the transformation of human beings into serpents, I will relate a circumstance said to have occurred during the first half of the present century, says Popular Science Monthly. Near Trexlertown, Lehigh county, dwelt a farmer named Weiler. His wife and three daughters had, by some means or other, incurred the enmity of a witch who lived but a short distance away, when the latter, it is supposed, took her revenge in the following manner: Whenever visitors came to the Weiler residence the girls, without any premonition whatever, would suddenly be changed into snakes, and after crawling back and forth along the top ridge of the wainscoting for several minutes, they were restored to their natural form. This curious transformation occurred quite frequently and the circumstances soon attained widespread notoriety. About the end of the third month the spell was broken and everything went on as before. Another popular fallacy is the existence of the hoop snake. This creature is usually reported as capable of grasping the tip of its tail with its mouth, and like a hoop running swiftly along in pursuit of an unwelcome intruder. This snake is believed, furthermore, to have upon its tail a short, poisonous horn, like a cock's spur, and if it should strike any living creature death would result. The stories concerning this marvelous snake usually end with the statement that the person pursued barely escapes and that the snake strikes a tree instead, causing it to wither and die.

### Boys That Were Tall.

William Henry Anger of Kensal Town, London, aged 13, was, at the Marylebone police court a few weeks ago, charged by the police with suspicious conduct. Anger, on being measured, was found to be 6 feet 3 inches in height, while the other boy, though one year older, was only about half his height. The magistrate, Mr. Plowden, was somewhat incredulous as to Anger's age, and the lad's father having entered the witness-box, assured his lordship that his son was only 13 years of age. James Toller, the young English giant, at the age of 10 was upward of 5 feet in height, and at 17 3 feet. His two sisters were of gigantic growth—one at the age of 13 years was 5 feet 8½ inches high, and the other at the age of 7 years was nearly 5 feet in height. The European Magazine for November, 1785, mentions a young Gloucestershire giant, who was the son of a Mr. Collett, of Upper Slaughter, near Strou-on-the-Wood and was 12 years of age. He was 5 feet 9 inches high, measured 4 feet 1½ inches round the waist, 2 feet 9 inches round each thigh, and 2 feet 4 inches round the calf of his leg.

### Hot Water Relief.

There is nothing that so promptly cuts short congestion of the lungs, soothes throat or inflammation of any kind of hot water when applied promptly and thoroughly. A strip of flannel, doubled, dipped in hot water and wrung out and applied around the neck of a child who has the croup, will sometimes bring relief in ten minutes. Headaches almost always yields to the simultaneous application of hot water to the feet and to the back of the neck. Hot water will relieve neuralgia, and a cupful taken before retiring is very beneficial. A glass of hot water taken before breakfast has cured many cases of indigestion, and no simple remedy is more widely recommended by physicians to dyspeptics.